

Understanding the numbers on your fertilizer



All fertilizer labels have three numbers displayed. The first number is the amount of nitrogen, the second is the amount of phosphate (P_2O_5) and the third is the amount of potash (K_2O).

These numbers represent the nutrients nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K).

Most of our soils here in Norman already have sufficient phosphorus for a healthy lawn.

To view the complete text of the City of Norman Manufactured Fertilizer Ordinance visit the City of Norman Engineering Division website at:

www.normanok.gov/city/public-works-engineering

To have your soil tested, contact the Cleveland County Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service at:
(405) 321-4774

For information on the disposal of unneeded fertilizer, call the City of Norman Environmental Services at
(405) 292-9731.

We Drink Our Storm Water

City of Norman
Public Works Department
Engineering Division
Phone: (405) 366-5455
E-mail: pwstormwater@normanok.gov



City of Norman

Manufactured Fertilizer Ordinance O-1213-34



Can too much of a good thing be bad?

Fertilizers are used by many homeowners and commercial applicators to maintain and improve the health and appearance of lawns and landscaping. Over use of home lawn and garden fertilizers, however, can lead to degradation of water quality in our lakes and streams as well as harmful impacts on aquatic life.

Did You Know?

Lake Thunderbird has been identified by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality as having impaired water quality due to elevated levels of chlorophyll-a. The high level of chlorophyll-a is directly related to increased algae production caused by excess phosphorus in the lake.



The Ordinance says

You may NOT:

- Apply any fertilizer when runoff producing rainfall is occurring or predicted or when soils are saturated and fertilizer may wash or move off-site.
- Apply any fertilizer to impervious surfaces such as streets, driveways or sidewalks. If this happens, sweep or blow the fertilizer back onto the intended surface or collect and dispose of properly.
- Store fertilizer uncontained on impervious surfaces
- Apply fertilizer within 25 feet of any wetland, watercourse or storm water retention/detention basin.
- Blow, sweep, dump or place leaves, grass clippings or any yard waste in any street, storm drain or waterway.

You can use phosphorus-containing fertilizer if:

- You are applying fertilizer in the first six months of turf establishment from seed or sod.
- A soil test by a certified lab shows a phosphorus level of 10 parts per million or less, and you apply at the recommended rate.
- It is naturally occurring phosphorus in a natural or organic fertilizer.

Phosphorus can cause excess growth of algae when carried by storm water runoff into water bodies. This, in turn, can cause algae blooms which can degrade water quality, produce toxins and result in taste and odor problems in our drinking water.

To help protect local surface waters and our drinking water supply, the City of Norman has adopted an ordinance regulating the use of manufactured fertilizers.

The ordinance is a proactive effort to preserve and protect water bodies within the City of Norman limits including our municipal water supply, Lake Thunderbird. The ordinance limits the use of phosphorus-containing fertilizer and establishes rules for the application of all fertilizers. It also requires commercial applicators to register with the City and provide their customers with information about proper fertilizer use.

This ordinance **does not** constitute a ban on the use of fertilizers in Norman.

Violating this Ordinance can result in a fine.